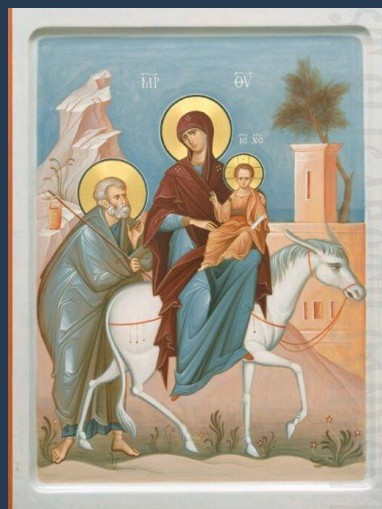




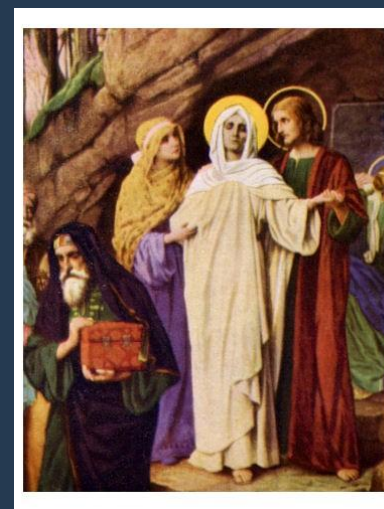
The Prophecy of Saint Simeon

How great was the shock to Mary's heart at hearing the sorrowful words, in which holy Simeon told the bitter Passion and death of her sweet Jesus, since in that same moment she realized in her mind all the insults, blows, and torments which the impious men were to offer to the Redeemer of the world. But a still sharper sword pierced her soul. It was the thought of men's ingratitude to her beloved Son. Now consider that, because of your sins, you are unhappily among the ungrateful, and casting yourself at the feet of the Mother of Dolors, say with sorrow: Virgin beloved, who did feel so bitter pangs of soul at seeing the abuse which I, wretch that I am, would make of the Blood of your dear Son, obtain for me, I pray you, by your riven heart, that in time to come, I may better correspond to God's mercies, profit by his heavenly grace, receive not in vain his lights and inspirations, and so be among the blessed number of those who are saved by the bitter passion of Jesus. Amen. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.



The Flight into Egypt

Consider the sharp sorrow which Mary felt when, Saint Joseph being warned by an angel, she had to flee by night in order to preserve her beloved Child from the slaughter decreed by Herod. What anguish was hers in leaving Judea, lest she should be overtaken by the soldiers of the cruel king! How great her privations in that long journey! What sufferings she bore in that land of exile, what sorrow amid that people given to idolatry! But consider how often you have renewed that bitter grief of Mary, when your sins have caused her Son to flee from your heart. Wherefore repent and turn to her, humbly saying: Sweetest Mother, once and once only Herod obliged you to flee with your Jesus, to escape the slaughter which he had commanded; but how often have I caused my Redeemer, and you with him, to flee from my heart, when I have admitted into it anything hateful to you and to my loving Lord. With tears and contrition I beg pardon. Mercy, dear Lady, fulfill the promise you that, for the future, with the help of God, I will ever maintain my Savior and you in complete possession of my soul. Amen. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.



The Loss of Jesus in the Temple

How dreadful was the grief of Mary, when she saw that she had lost her beloved Son! And, as if to increase her sorrow when she sought him diligently among her kinfolk and acquaintances, she could hear no tidings of him. No hindrances stayed her, nor weariness, nor danger; but she forthwith returned to Jerusalem, and for three long days sought him sorrowing. Great be your confusion, O my soul, who has so often lost your Jesus by your sins, and has given no heed to seek him at once: a sign that you do not make of very little or of no account the precious treasure of divine love. Weep then for your blindness, and turning yourself to that Lady, sighs, your Mother, say with compunction: virgin most afflicted, obtain that I may learn from you to seek Jesus when I have lost him by giving ear to my passions and to the evil suggestions of the devil; obtain that I may find him again, and when I possess him once more, that I may ever repeat the words of the spouse, "I found Him whom my soul loveth; I held Him, and I will not let him go." Amen. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.



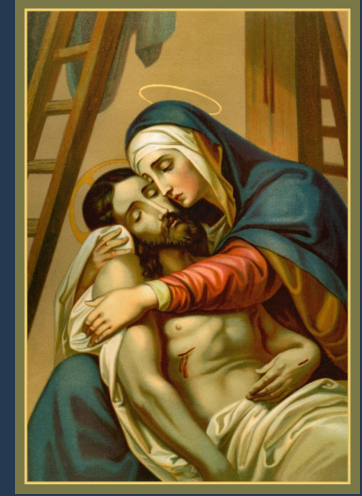
Mary Meets Jesus on the Way

Come, O you sinners, come and see if you can endure so sad a sight. This Mother, so tender and loving, meets her beloved Son, meets him amidst an impious rabble, who drag him to a cruel death, wounded, torn by stripes, crowned by thorns, streaming with blood, bearing his heavy Cross. Ah, consider, my soul, the grief of the blessed Virgin thus beholding her Son! Who would not weep at seeing this Mother's grief? But who has been the cause of such woe? I, it is, who with my sins have so cruelly wounded the heart of my sorrowing Mother! And yet I am not moved; I am as a stone, when my heart should break because of my ingratitude. Virgin most holy, I crave pardon for the sorrows I have caused you. I know and confess that I deserve it not, for it is I through whom your Jesus was so treated; yet do you call to mind that you are the Mother of mercy. Show mercy then to me, and I promise to be more faithful to my Redeemer in the time to come, and thus to console you for the many sorrows I have offered to your afflicted heart. Amen. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.



Jesus dies on the Cross

Look, devout soul, look to Calvary, whereon are raised two altars of sacrifice, one on the body of Jesus, the other on the heart of Mary. Sad is the sight of that dear Mother drowned in a sea of woe, seeing her beloved Son, part of her very self, cruelly nailed to the shameful tree of the Cross. Ah me! How every blow of the hammer, how every stripe which fell on the Savior's forehead, fell also in the disconsolate spirit of the Virgin. As she stood at the foot of the Cross, pierced by the sword of sorrow, she turned her eyes on him, until she knew that he lived no longer and had resigned his spirit to his Eternal Father. Then her own soul was like to have joined itself to that of Jesus. Mother of Sorrows, who would not leave Calvary until you had drunk the last drop of the chalice of your woe, how great is my communion of face, that I can never cease to take up my cross, and strive to endeavor to avoid those slight sufferings which the Lord, for my good, has sent upon me. Obtain for me, O Mother, that I may see clearly the value of suffering, and may be enabled, if not to cry with St. Francis Xavier, "More to suffer my God! Ah, more!" At least to bear meekly all my crosses and trials. Amen. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.

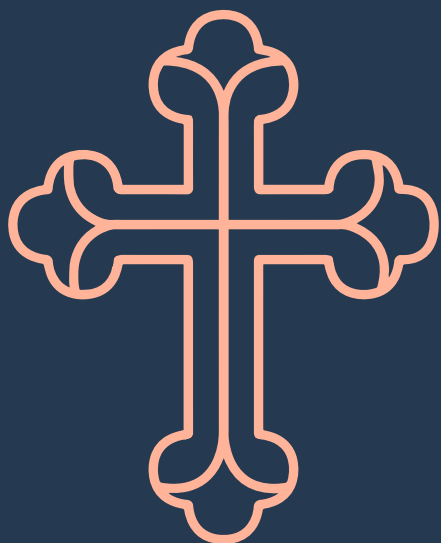


Mary Receives the Dead Body of Jesus

Consider the most bitter sorrow which rent the soul of Mary, when she saw the dead body of her dear Jesus on her knees, covered with blood, all torn with deep wounds. O mournful Mother, a bundle of myrrh, indeed, is your Beloved to you. Who would not pity you? Whose heart would not be softened, seeing affliction which would move a stone? Behold John who could be comforted, Magdalen and the other Mary in deep affliction, and Nicodemus, who can scarcely bear his sorrow. Shall I alone be tearless amidst such grief? Ingrate and hard am I! Grant, dear Mother, that my heart may be pierced with the same sword that pierced your sorrowful soul, that it may be softened, and may indeed lament those my heavy sins which were the cause of your cruel suffering. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.



Jesus is placed in the Tomb



Consider the sighs which burst from Mary's sad heart when she saw her beloved Jesus laid within the tomb. What grief was hers when she saw the stone lifted to cover that sacred tomb. She gazed a last time on the lifeless body of her Son, and could scarcely detach her eyes from those gaping wounds. And when the great stone was rolled to the door of the sepulcher, oh, then indeed her heart seemed torn from her body! Mother most desolate, who did indeed in body depart from the sepulcher, but did leave your heart where was your only treasure, obtain that all our desires, all our love may rest there with you. Surely our hearts must melt with love to our Savior, who has shed his Blood for our salvation. Surely we must love you, who has suffered so much for us. Oh, by all your sorrows, grant that the memory of them may be ever imprinted on our mind, that our hearts may burn with love to God, and to you, sweet Mother, who did pour out all your soul in sorrow for the Passion of Jesus: to him be honor, glory, and thanksgiving for ever and ever. Amen. Hail Mary. Virgin Most Sorrowful, pray for us.



Monday

MOST holy Mary, Queen of heaven, I who would hate the sight of the Evil One now dedicate myself to thy service forever; and I offer myself to honor and love thee as long as I live. Accept me for thy servant, and cast me not away from thee, as I do not deserve. In thee, O my Mother, I place all my hope. All blessing and thanksgiving be to God, who in His mercy gave me this trust in thee. True it is, that in time past I have fallen miserably into sin; but by the merits of Jesus Christ, and by thy prayers, I hope that God has pardoned me. But this is not enough, my Mother. One thought distresses me; it is that I may yet lose the grace of God. Danger is ever near; the devil sleeps not; fresh temptations assail me. Protect me, then, my Queen; help me against the assaults of my spiritual enemy. Never let me sin again, or offend Jesus thy Son. Let me not by sin lose my soul, Heaven, and my God. This one grace, Mary, I ask of thee; this is my desire, this may your prayers obtain for me. Such is my hope. Amen.



Tuesday

MOST holy Mary, Mother of Goodness, Mother of Mercy, when I reflect upon my sins and upon the moment of my death, I tremble and am confounded. O my sweetest Mother, in the blood of Jesus, in thy intercession, are my hopes. Comforter of the sad, abandon me not at that hour; fail not to console me in that affliction. If even now I am so tormented by remorse for the sins I have committed, the uncertainty of my pardon, the danger of a relapse, and the strictness of the Judgment, how will it be with me then? O my Mother, before death overtakes me, obtain for me great sorrow for my sins, a true amendment, and constant fidelity to God for the remainder of my life. And when at length my hour has come, then do thou, Mary, my hope, be my aid in those great troubles wherewith my soul will be encompassed. Strengthen me, that I may not despair when the enemy sets my sins before my face. Obtain for me at that moment grace to invoke thee often, so that with thy sweet name and that of thy most holy Son upon my lips I may breathe forth my spirit. This grace thou hast granted to many of thy servants; this, too, is my hope and my desire. Amen

Wednesday

MOTHER of God, most holy Mary, how often, by my sins have I merited hell! Long ago, perhaps judgment would have gone forth against my first mortal sin, hadst thou not, in thy tender pity, delayed the justice of God, and afterward attracted me by thy sweetness to have confidence in thy prayers. And oh, how very often should I have fallen in the dangers which beset my steps hadst thou not, loving Mother that thou art, preserved me by the grace thou didst obtain for me by thy prayers. But, my Queen, what will thy prayers and favors avail me, if after all I perish in the flames of hell? If there was once a time when I loved thee not, now, my Mother to God, I love thee before all. Wherefore, henceforth and forever, let me not turn my back upon thee and upon my God, who through thee hast granted me so many mercies. O Lady, most worthy of all love, let it not be I thy child, should be doomed to hate and to curse thee forever in hell. Thou wilt surely never permit thy servant to be lost who loves thee. O Mary, say not that I ever can be lost! Yet lost I shall assuredly be if I abandon thee. But who could ever have the heart to leave thee? Who can ever forget thy love? No, it is impossible for that man to perish who faithfully recommends himself to thee and has recourse to thee. Only leave me not, my Mother, in my own hands, or I am lost! Let me but cling to thee! Save me, my hope! Save me from hell; or, rather, save me from sin, which alone can condemn me to hell. Amen.

Thursday

QUEEN of Heaven, thou sittest enthroned above all the choirs of the angels nearest to God; from this vale of miseries, I, a poor sinner, say to thee, "Hail Mary," praying to thee in thy love to turn upon me thy gracious eyes. See, Mary, the dangers among which I dwell, and shall ever have to dwell while I live upon this earth. I may yet lose my soul, heaven and God. In thee, Lady, is my hope. I love thee; and I yearn for the time when I shall see myself safe at thy feet. What shall I kiss that hand, which has dispensed to me so many graces? Alas, it is too true, my Mother, that I have ever been very ungrateful during my whole life; but if I get to heaven, then I will love thee there every moment for all eternity and make there reparation in some part for my ingratitude by ever blessing and praising thee. Thanks be to God that He has granted me this hope through the precious blood of Jesus, and through thy powerful intercession. This has been the hope of all thy true lovers; and not one of them has been defrauded of his hope.

No, neither shall I be defrauded of this hope. O Mary, pray to thine own Son Jesus, as I too pray to Him, by the merits of His passion, to strengthen and increase this hope. Amen

Friday

O MARY, thou art the noblest, highest, purest, fairest creature of God, the holiest of all creatures! Oh, that all men knew thee, loved thee, my Queen, as thou deservest! Yet great is my consolation, Mary, in that there are blessed souls in the courts of heaven, and just souls still on earth, whose hearts are enthralled by thy beauty and goodness. But above all I rejoice in this, that our God Himself loves thee alone more than all men and angels together. I too, O loveliest Queen, I, a miserable sinner, dare to love thee, though my love is too little; would that I had a greater love, a more tender love; this thou must gain for me, since to love thee is a great mark of predestination, and a grace which God grants to those who shall be saved. Moreover, O my Mother, when I reflect upon the debt I owe thy Son, I see He deserves of me an immeasurable love. Do thou, then, who hast no other desire but to see Him loved, pray that I may have this grace – a great love for Jesus Christ. Obtain it, thou who dost obtain what thou desirest. I covet not goods of earth, nor honors, nor riches, but I desire that which thine own heart desires most – to love my God alone. Oh, can it be that thou wilt not aid me in a desire so acceptable to thee? No, it is impossible! Even now I feel thy help; even now thou dost pray for me. Pray for me, Mary, pray; nor ever cease to pray, till thou seest me safe in heaven, where I shall be certain of possessing and of loving my God and thee, my dearest Mother, forever and ever. Amen.

Saturday

MOST holy Mary, I know the graces which thou hast obtained for me, and I know the ingratitude which I have shown thee. The ungrateful man is unworthy of favors, and yet for all this I will not distrust in thy mercy. O my great Advocate, have pity on me. Thou, Mary, art the stewardess of every grace which God vouchsafes to give us sinners, and therefore did He make thee so mightily rich and kind, that thou mightest succor us. I will that I may be saved: in thy hands I place my eternal salvation, to thee I consign my soul. I will to be associated with those who are thy special servants; reject me not. Thou art always seeking the wretched to console them. Cast not away, then a wretched sinner who has recourse to thee. Speak for me, Mary; thy Son will grant what thou shalt ask Him. Take me under thy protection; and it is enough for me; for with thee to guard me I fear no ill – no, not even my sins, because thou wilt obtain God's pardon for them; neither evil spirits, because thou art far mightier than hell; nor my Judge Jesus Christ, for at thy prayer He will lay aside His wrath.

Protect me, then, my Mother; obtain for me pardon of my sins, love of Jesus, holy perseverance, a good death, and heaven. It is true, I merit not these graces; yet do thou only ask them of our God and I shall obtain them. Pray, then, to Jesus for me. Mary, my Queen, in thee I trust; in this I trust, I rest, I live; and with this hope I wish to die.
Amen

Sunday

MOTHER of my God, look down upon a poor sinner, who has recourse to thee and puts his trust in thee. I am not worthy that thou shouldst even cast thine eyes upon me; but I know that thou, beholding Jesus thy Son dying for sinners, dost yearn exceedingly to save them. O Mother of Mercy, look on my miseries and have pity upon me.



Men say thou art the refuge of the sinner, the hope of the desperate, the aid of the lost; thou art, then, my refuge, hope and aid. It is thy prayers which must save me. For the love of Jesus Christ be my help; reach forth thy hand to the poor fallen sinner who recommends himself to thee. I know that it is thy joy to aid the sinner when thou canst; help me now, for thou canst help me. By my sins I have forfeited the grace of God and my own soul. I place myself in thy hands; oh, tell me what to do that I may regain the grace of God, and I will do it. My Saviour bids me to come to thee for help; He wills that I should look to thy pity; that so, not only the merits of thy Son, but thine own prayers, too, may unite to save me. To thee, then, I have recourse: pray to Jesus for me; and make known the great good thou canst do for one who trusts in thee. Be it done unto me according to my hope.
Amen.

